

REMARKS

Claims 21, 23, 25 to 27, 51, 53, 55 to 57, 64 and 65 are in the application, of which Claims 21, 51, 64 and 65 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the indication that Claims 24, 25, 53 and 54 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office Action, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, while the Examiner, in the indication of allowable subject matter, references a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, there is no such rejection in the Office Action.

Claims 21, 26, 27, 56, 57 and 64 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,009,439 (Shiomi) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,490,683 (Yamada). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.


Claims 21, 51 and 64 have been amended in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. In addition, newly added Claim 65 is in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claims 21, 51, 64 and 65 are now in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank L. Cire', written over a horizontal line.

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